

Tribal  
1-4 Portland Square  
Bristol  
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
www.ofsted.gov.uk

**Direct T** 0117 311 5307  
**Direct F** 0117 315 0430  
**Direct email:** emma.thomson@tribalgroup.com

18 October 2012

Mrs W Donnelly  
Headteacher  
Halling Primary School  
Howlsmere Close  
Halling  
Rochester  
Kent  
ME2 1ER

Dear Mrs Donnelly

### **Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Halling Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 17 October and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to those governors I met with and to the local authority improvement officer and to those staff and pupils with whom I spoke.

Since the school was inspected, the senior leadership team has restructured, with changes to the leadership of Key Stage 1 and mathematics. The deputy headteacher no longer has responsibility for a class. She has assumed more responsibility for monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and for raising achievement.

As a result of the inspection on 1–2 February 2012, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

There are clear indications that pupils are now doing better. The most recent tests and assessments of pupils' work show that attainment is rising. While writing continues to be relatively strong, the biggest gains are in reading. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in mathematics was falling. Attainment in mathematics is now rising and is broadly average. A greater proportion of pupils achieve the expected levels in both English and mathematics, so that Year 6 pupils this year were better prepared for moving into secondary education.

Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 indicate rising attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, with the strongest gains in mathematics. Writing remains the weakest, with boys doing much less well than girls. Children continue to make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with particularly good gains in what they know and understand about the world around them, and in their physical development and in expressive arts and design.

Scrutiny of pupils' books, together with observations of teaching, indicates the pace of improvement is not consistent across classes. The strongest teaching is in Years 5 and 6. This is reflected in the progress pupils make. In the best teaching, there is good pace because teachers explain clearly and check that pupils understand what they are to do. While no teaching is inadequate, some requires improvement to become good. This is because teachers are not sufficiently clear about what pupils are expected to do so that learning slows and pupils have to seek help and reassurance. In some lessons, teachers do too much of the talking and do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to work together. This is a real shame as pupils work very well together, whether discussing their learning or peer assessing one another's work. Peer assessment not only provides valuable feedback to the pupil being assessed, but also helps their classmate who is doing the assessing to consolidate their own learning. Some marking is of high quality and tells pupils how well they are doing and how to improve. Less effective marking tells pupils what is going well but does not provide advice on how to improve further. Where it does, teachers do not check that it has been acted on. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 have National Curriculum targets for English and mathematics but not all know how their work will help them reach their targets.

At the time of the last inspection, pupils' behaviour was good and this continues to be a strength. Pupils behave well, are enthusiastic learners and have positive attitudes to their work.

The senior leadership team has provided effective support for school improvement. They make much better use of assessment information to monitor the progress of pupils and hold teachers to account for their progress. The school improvement plan contains appropriate priorities, and success criteria are now more closely matched to how well pupils are doing. The plan could be further sharpened by linking targets and improvements in provision even more closely to how well targeted groups of pupils are expected to do. This would further strengthen the ability of the governing body in holding the school to account. Because governors have a better understanding of their role and ask more challenging questions about pupils' achievement, the governing body is increasingly effective.

Safeguarding arrangements comply fully with statutory requirements. The single central register is clear, and staff training is up to date. The local authority has drawn up an appropriate plan of support. It has provided well-focused and timely support to improve both leadership and management and the quality of teaching.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

**Robert Lovett**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2012**

- Build the leadership capacity to improve the quality of teaching and raise the achievement of pupils rapidly by:
  - setting consistently challenging targets for all groups of pupils and ensuring they are met
  - including precise, quantifiable goals, milestones and success measures in the school development plan to evaluate robustly the impact of actions
  - the governing body using these specific measures to challenge the pace of improvement and evaluation of the school's effectiveness
  - leaders using monitoring and assessment information systematically to remedy weaknesses identified in teaching
  - robustly evaluating the impact of new initiatives and interventions on improving teaching and accelerating pupils' progress.
  
- Ensure teaching is consistently good or better by July 2012 so that all pupils achieve well, particularly in mathematics, by:
  - teachers accurately assessing what pupils know, can do and need to learn next
  - consistently matching challenging work to the different abilities of pupils
  - teachers constantly monitoring the learning of all pupils in lessons so that misconceptions can be corrected and pupils moved on to their next steps quickly
  - ensuring feedback in lessons and the use of pupils' targets help them to understand clearly what they do well and how they can improve.